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Comments: The East Fork South Fork Salmon River (EFSFSR) is NOT the place for any mining operation, let alone what is being proposed by Midas Gold. The true value of this watershed and ecosystem is its role as critical habitat for bull trout, steelhead (rare B-run fish), and summer-run chinook salmon. There are not many watersheds left in Idaho like this--healthy with self-sustaining wild anadromous fish populations not supplemented by hatcheries. The EFSFSR is a stronghold of wild steelhead and chinook habitat and also supports robust spawning populations of bull trout. Just downstream, the South Fork Salmon River is no exception and is equally threatened by upstream mining activities. According to USFS documentation, "The South Fork Salmon River contains the most important remaining habitat for summer Chinook salmon in the Columbia River Basin."

Mining operations create unacceptable levels of risk for the EFSFSR watershed and its species. A spill from a truck or failure of waste retention structures can have consequences from the EFSFSR all the way down to the main stem Salmon River. Two such accidents occurred in 1989 and 1990; 1,700 gallons of diesel were spilled into adjacent Johnston Creek and cyanide was released into the EFSFSR.

The EPA has already spent \$13M of taxpayer money cleaning up after past mining operations. How much more are we willing to spend? The risk to one of Idaho's best natural resources is just too great.

Additionally, Midas Gold's plans will disrupt access to thousands of acres of public land used by a variety of recreationalists, not to mention the residents of nearby Yellow Pine. Why should the subsidiary of a Canadian company be allowed to control access to public land in the United States? This is completely unreasonable.

I am urging the US Forest Service to deny Midas Gold's operations at Stibnite on the EFSFSR.

Respectfully signed,

Micah Lauer